

PRESCRIBED VS. DESCRIBED:
THE VARIABILITY OF SPANISH MOOD AND TENSE SELECTION IN SUBORDINATE
CLAUSES OF EMOTIVE VERBS

by

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Abstract

Considerable research exists on subjunctive versus indicative mood patterns of use by both native and L2 speakers of Spanish. Though intermediate level textbooks expose L2 learners to the various tenses of the subjunctive mood, literature has shown that students still struggle with its implementation in their discourse, and various reasons are offered. Little has been done to analyze the prescribed uses that textbooks offer to students regarding mood selection and how these prescribed uses may differ from what Spanish speakers do in real life.

The paper first offers a brief explanation of L2 learners' mood selection in Spanish, followed by a description of Spanish moods and the realis/irrealis dichotomy that is often placed at the center of Spanish mood selection in the literature. Following this, the study offers an analysis of six intermediate level Spanish textbooks' prescribed uses of two past subjunctive tenses (present perfect and imperfect), as prior research has shown an overlap in the functions of their indicative counterparts. The textbook analysis is then compared to a corpus composed of messages sent on the social media platform Twitter, containing one of six emotive phrases as main clauses, with three in present, three in preterit. The results show that Spanish-speaking users of Twitter employ the prescribed subjunctive mood more often when the verb in the main clause is expressed in the preterit instead of the present, though no such tendency is discussed in the textbooks. The results also reveal an overlap in the functions of the past tense subjunctive moods. The present perfect subjunctive (i.e. *haya trabajado* 'has worked') is used in the subordinate clause nearly 40% of the time with emotive verbal main clauses expressed in the preterit, where the imperfect subjunctive would normally be expected according to prescriptive norms. This pattern of use is not discussed in any of the analyzed textbooks. A discussion of the limitations of the study, implications for textbook writers and further research then follow.

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1 Introduction

Many researchers have studied the L2 acquisition of mood/modality as well as the patterns of Spanish mood selection by both L2 and native speakers. As has been seen in research and in the classroom, L2 students of Spanish have a difficult time fine tuning their use of the subjunctive in its many forms. The concepts of mood selection and irrealis context is viewed as rather cognitively demanding, so much so that it is argued that students may opt to process the words and morphemes most necessary for communication, which likely does not include the subjunctive mood marker (Kaufman, 2011; Lynch, 2000; Sweeley 1988). Unless students are consciously considering the production and formation of the subjunctive mood, they may leave it out, opting for the indicative in its place as it is used with greater frequency in the Spanish foreign language classroom.

By example:

- (1) I do not want him to come. a. *No quiero que él viene.
b. No quiero que él venga.

To the second language learner, the difference between the employment of *viene* (1a) and *venga* (1b) in the above sentences, though possibly made clear in the classroom, contains no salient semantic information, and as such, may produce no difference in his/her perception of said sentences. When translated to English by a beginning L2 speaker of Spanish, (1a) and (1b) as provided above are viewed as equivalents. As such, L2 students of Spanish may, when under a taxing cognitive load, produce (1a), a prescriptively unacceptable utterance which employs the present indicative (*viene*) in place of the present subjunctive (*venga*) due to their heightened exposure to these present indicative verbal forms and the lack of apparent difference between the two in semantic meaning. A morphological difference between the indicative and subjunctive

verbal forms in English is very rare, or even non-existent, for the majority of English native-speakers these days. Much research has been done regarding students' order of acquisition of uses of the subjunctive, the patterns of error they exhibit in mood selection and what effect their L1 may have on their employment of the subjunctive in L2 Spanish (Farley, 2011; Massery, 2010; Sanchez-Naranjo, 2011; Kaufman, 2011).

Although employment and acquisition of the subjunctive may prove taxing, it is additionally challenging for students to contrast the selection of the subjunctive and indicative moods due to the vast variability of uses and contexts of the two moods. The indicative is often selected after patterned “triggers” of habitual actions, assertion and definiteness whilst the subjunctive commonly occurs after patterned “triggers” such as uncertainty, doubts, wishes and emotions, amongst others.

Take the following examples, from intermediate level textbooks, followed by my English translations, with the emphasis as in the source document:

- (2) ***Tan pronto como** llego a casa, **me quito** los zapatos.* (Gente, 2013, p. 43)

‘**As soon as** I get home, **I take off** my shoes’

- (3) *Es cierto que sus chistes **son** divertidos.* (Avanzando, 2013, p. 30)

‘**It is** true that their jokes are funny.’

- (4) ***No creo que esté** en Santiago hasta el día 19.* (Gente, 2013, p. 54)

‘**I do not believe he is** in Santiago until the 19th.’

- (5) *El entrenador **quiere** que los jugadores **levanten** pesas* (Identidades, 2003, p. 140).

‘The trainer **wants** the players to **lift** weights’

In (2) and (3), the indicative is prescriptively employed due to the implication of habit and assertion respectively, as indicated previously. The latter two examples are typically prescribed to require the subjunctive due to their expression of doubts and wishes respectively, both of which are subjective, irrealis concepts.

In expressing hypothetical or non-existent contexts (as in *si* ‘if’ clauses) the imperfect subjunctive is used with situations in the present, and the pluperfect subjunctive is employed with hypothetical, impossible past discourse contexts.

Take the following sentences for comparison for example:

(6) Present: *Si tuviera el dinero, compraría el coche.*

If I had the money, I would buy the car.

(7) Past: *Si hubiera tenido el dinero, habría comprado el coche.*

If I had had the money, I would have bought the car.

As can be seen within the prior examples (6) and (7), as the subjunctive is a mood, it is not bound by time, with different subjunctive forms employed within different time referents, “triggers” for its use and contexts.

1.1 Mood & Modality

In attempts to elucidate the Spanish subjunctive, which at current still continues to intrigue both L2 learners and researchers alike, much research has been done regarding its most frequent matrix clause “triggers” and most frequent contexts of occurrence (e.g.: Prado, 1974; Villalta 2001; Faingold 2000). Additionally, many articles attempt to contrast it from its counterpart, the indicative, and many make mention of the existing dichotomy between the notions of realis versus irrealis. Use of the realis mood requires a perception by the speaker of the statement/action/item to exist or be true in the real world. The opposite is the case for the

irrealis mood. In this view, the realis mood is expressed with the indicative, the irrealis with the subjunctive. There are varying degrees to which the dichotomy of realis/irrealis is accepted in the literature, often with stipulations, edits and additions. It is necessary to clarify, however, that the dichotomy is not based on actual existence or truth, but whether the speaker believes the information to be true or wishes to express it as so.

Villalta (2001) proposes that the Spanish subjunctive mood is used in predicates that express comparison of alternatives rather than the commonly perceived realis/irrealis dichotomy, questioning the functionality of solely the realis/irrealis dichotomy. One example is related to the emotive factive verb “to regret” (*lamentar*). In Spanish, a main clause expressing regret prescriptively requires the subjunctive in the subordinate clause. For Villalta however, this questions the realis/irrealis notion because “regret” cannot reflect both a notion of irrealis and the semantic meaning of regret in itself because regret implies that whatever is regretted must indeed be real or perceived to be real.

In regards to the realis/irrealis dichotomy, Faingold (2000) approaches Spanish subjunctive parameters from a theory of markedness. In his perspective, the less marked (realis) structures take the indicative whilst the more marked (irrealis) structures take the subjunctive. He adds that emotive verbal expressions within main clauses employ use of the subjunctive in the subordinate clause when said subordinate clause is unexpected.

However, no matter how many and which rules are prescribed, much variance is seen in the employment of the subjunctive among native speakers of Spanish, which only further creates confusion for L2 learners. As Gudmestad (2010) expresses it, “sociolinguistic studies have demonstrated that Spanish speakers do not use the subjunctive or the indicative categorically in most linguistic contexts (e.g. Silva-Corvalán, 1994) and that, rather than solely the factor of

lexical trigger, multiple linguistic and extra-linguistic variables, such as semantic category, time reference, and task, condition this variable use (e.g. Finanger, 2011; de la Puente-Schubeck, 1992; Gudmestad 2010)” (p. 5). Additionally, some note that the divide between verbal moods is suffering a shift towards an increased use of the indicative and an ever decreased employment of the subjunctive in a variety of contexts, particularly within some contact varieties. De la Puente-Schubeck’s (1992) study of the use of the subjunctive by the Spanish speakers of Albuquerque, New Mexico reflects this decreased employment of the subjunctive mood over apparent time. De la Puente-Schubeck performed a three step study on the subjunctive use of three generations of ten Chicano families living in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The results of the study reflect a lessened use of the subjunctive in informal speech in comparison to formal contexts and decreases in use with each generation. This simplification of New Mexican Spanish is not atypical of Spanish language use in the United States. Additionally, in a similar study by Lynch (2000), on the subjunctive use of the Spanish of Cuban immigrants and their successive generations, an expansion of the indicative in variable discourse contexts in place of the subjunctive was found in addition to an increased use of the past subjunctive in place of the conditional indicative in hypothetical discourse contexts. Second and third generation speech contained nearly the same frequency of employment of the subjunctive use in the expected contexts of usage, aside from volition, where third generation and first generation Cuban immigrants differed significantly. Overall, the study found that across all three immigrant generations, the subjunctive mood is being lost.

Although these studies deal with the United States and the speech of the minority language with any two languages in contact naturally suffers changes as per the influence of the majority language, it is imperative to recognize nonetheless that the contexts in which the

subjunctive is employed, even amongst the first generation speakers in these studies, is highly variable (Montrul, 2013). Further studies regarding this shift in use in monolingual contexts will prove beneficial. However, as Gudmestad (2013) states, “Variation in the use of verbal moods is related in part to a change in progress, in which indicative use is increasing and subjunctive use is decreasing” (p. 5).

With such variability and an ever increasing presence of the indicative in situations often prescribed as requiring the subjunctive, we arrive at the focus of this study. Though much research has been done on the subjunctive, its patterns of employment and situations in which speakers, both native and L2 speakers, flout its prescribed uses, little has been done to address the manner in which textbooks approach the subjunctive mood in all tenses and how this compares to what Spanish speakers actually do.

This study does not focus on the manner or order of acquisition of the subjunctive by L2 learners nor the manner in which it is taught. Rather, it provides an analysis of the manner in which textbooks expose students to the subjunctive and its present, present perfect and imperfect forms, and the possible differences between these presentations and native speaker production. In assisting students with L2 acquisition, the manner in which textbooks approach individual topics and concepts is invaluable, as students undeniably revere textbooks as the center of knowledge and as a central informational reference. Intermediate L2 students study foreign languages for a variety of reasons at the university level, as either or both instrumental and/or integrative motivations. Instrumental motivation regards utilitarian motives, such as acquiring a job or degree certification whilst integrative motivation reflects personalized, interpersonal motives such as social group acceptance (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). Whatever the reason, it may be assumed that most students, in acquiring a second language, have interest, or at the least no

qualms with, developing their listening, writing, reading and/or speaking abilities. Additionally, I argue that there is little value in teaching students to speak a second language if the patterns to which they are exposed are unnatural, that is, patterns not used by native-speakers and writers of the L2. If we are to assist students in the development of their language skills and speech/writing patterns, we must be certain to provide them with the appropriate linguistic information that reflects what native speakers actually do. This is even more imperative regarding the approach to exposing students to mood selection, as it has been shown that students struggle particularly with its acquisition. Second, the study serves as an addition to the current literature regarding the varying patterns of use and functions of the subjunctive tenses, reflected in a casual, digital, written context.

1.2 Research Questions

- RQ1. Is the subjunctive mood employed by native speakers less than as prescribed in the text books?
- RQ2. If R1 yields affirmative, what are the contrasts between the manners in which students are exposed to the subjunctive (imperfect, present perfect & present) in textbooks (prescriptive use) and what native-speakers of Spanish actually do (descriptive use)?
- RQ3. Are native speakers more likely to flout the prescribed patterns of subjunctive use when expressing themselves in the past and if so, is this touched on in the rules commonly prescribed to students in language texts?
- RQ4. Finally, if a disconnect is found between prescriptive and descriptive patterns of use in Spanish mood selection, are there any different, salient patterns of use that should be presented in textbooks?

1.3 Hypotheses

I hypothesize that the prescriptive approach to the present, present perfect and imperfect subjunctive tenses may be too simplistic. Although any second language learning textbook must select to what it will expose students, I suspect there may be rather frequent tendencies to which students are not prescribed. As Lipski (1978) comments, “A simplistic explanation will not suffice to describe the intricacies of indicative/subjunctive usage in such borderline cases involving the language in a state of transition. The very lack of consistency on the part of native speakers belies any attempt to force the data into a single mold” (p. 94).

I propose additionally that Spanish speakers use the indicative in past tense subordinate clauses with past tense main clauses normally prescribed as requiring the subjunctive more often than when the main clause is a present emotive verbal expression. That is, that Spanish speakers are more likely to employ the indicative in the subordinate clause if the emotive verbal expression is expressed in the preterit rather than in the present.

Variability in tense selection for past temporal reference has been seen in particular regions of the world (e.g.: in portions of Spain and Bolivia, Peru and Argentina): a shift from the use of the preterit to the present perfect has resulted in much overlap in the function of these two tenses (Howe & Schwenter, 2003). An example of this may be seen in Howe and Schwenter’s (2003) study reflecting tense selection between the present perfect and preterit, in which many of the normative uses of the preterit in Spanish have shifted to functions of the present perfect, resulting in a slow decrease in use in the preterit. As they describe (2003), “The normative use of the simple past [or preterit] in Spanish is that of describing punctual situations in the past... The Spanish PP [present perfect], in all dialects of the language, is used for a range of distinct functions, such as resultative, experiential, continuative, ‘hot news’” (p. 62). These functions are

all examples of the prototypical past event that has current or present reference (Howe & Schwenter, 2003).

This decrease in use of the preterit due to an overlap in functions between the two tenses is further reflected in the results of the same aforementioned study, in which individuals of age 40 or older were using the preterit in more situations that normatively call for it than the younger generation, who selected more the present perfect (Howe & Schwenter, 2003). This tendency is not seen in Spanish alone, but in other Romance languages, including French (e.g.: Harris, 1982).

Though the aforementioned studies deal with the indicative mood of these tenses, I hypothesize that the results of the current study may reflect a similar tendency of Spanish speakers to use the present perfect subjunctive in situations of normative use of the past subjunctive tense (the imperfect subjunctive, as there is no modern preterit subjunctive). Thus, I hypothesize that Spanish native-speakers use the present perfect subjunctive in place of the imperfect subjunctive regarding the emotive verbal phrases under study when these are expressed in preterit main clauses. As great variability has been seen in Spanish-speakers' mood selection, the selection of tense within mood will likely reflect a similar variability.

2 Data and Methods

As the current study approaches many questions, there are many steps at play regarding the methodology to tackle them. The data and results follow a description of the R language programming, Twitter and the prescriptive grammar tendencies found in six L2, intermediate level textbooks of Spanish regarding their approaches to the subjunctive mood in general, its patterns of use and when each tense of the subjunctive mood is prescriptively employed (present perfect subjunctive, imperfect subjunctive and present subjunctive).

2.1 Twitter

Twitter was used as the source for data collection in order to gather native-speakers' casual production of the subjunctive and indicative moods following "triggers" textbooks typically deem as requiring the subjunctive mood in Spanish. Twitter was selected in particular to produce a corpus of data of NS performance because it:

- 1) is produced naturally, avoiding any influence that may come from the participants awareness of what the item under study is
- 2) is produced for an audience of friends and acquaintances
- 3) is free of the effects of the interviewer's paradox that are experienced with formal interview style methods of data gathering
- 4) allows participants to remain anonymous

The aforementioned interviewer's paradox is an issue that often arises in traditional methods of data collection involving human subjects in that the known presence of the interviewer or researcher has an effect on the behavior and speech of the interviewees. Twitter, a relatively popular social networking site, provides for all of the aforementioned, including avoidance of the interviewer's paradox. In an ever increasingly globalized world, the use of the internet and social media sites is on the rise and communication is no longer limited to face-to-face interaction or phone calls. Additionally, as social media grow ever more popular, the data collected can both be collected near instantaneously and be pulled from a wide variety of participants, allowing for a broader corpus than other media of data collection may afford. The tweets for the current study were pulled internationally from those written in Spanish using a script written in R, a freeware program for graphics and statistical computation. The program has a variety of functions, including data collection, chart and graph plotting, statistical analysis and

the ability to run scripts. R allows one to pull keywords or phrases with a number of specifiable variations of said keywords and phrases to easily extract data from Twitter and export this data to a spreadsheet program. For the first part of the study, R was used to extract the 1,000 most recent tweets for three emotive verbs commonly prescribed to students as triggering the subjunctive in the subordinate clause. Emotive verbs were selected in particular as they are covered in every one of the textbooks analyzed regarding “triggers” of the subjunctive mood. Students are exposed to them early in the sequence and as is seen in Kaufman (2011), emotive verbs are the trigger intermediate L2 students of Spanish most seem to struggle with developing as a pattern requiring subjunctive use. In his study regarding L2 intermediate learner mood selection, students consistently flouted the subjunctive in situations expressing emotion over any other subjunctive prescriptive trigger studied. In addition, the first 200 tweets containing *me gusta que*, *me gustó que*, *me encanta que*, *me encantó que*, *me molesta que* or *me molestó que* were analyzed as “triggering” either the subjunctive or indicative mood by tweeters, for a total of 1,200 tokens of the six aforementioned phrases tweeted between February 14th and March 3rd, 2015.

The aforementioned phrases under study are expressions of feelings/emotion in Spanish. Expressions of emotion are a semantic classification, to which any personal or impersonal verb or verbal phrase conveying an emotional reaction or judgment belongs (Ferrell, 1999). Examples include: joy, surprise, anger, fear, worry, amongst others. Ferrell (1999) comments that “emotion is best understood as forming a continuum of meaning, with possibilities for expressing strong emotion (I am angry, I am elated) as well as expressing softer or more moderated emotion (I hope, It is nice)” (p. 65).

Prescriptively, students are instructed to use the subjunctive in subordinate clauses with main clauses containing triggers of emotion. Some common emotive verbal expressions that prescriptively trigger the subjunctive include *alegrarse de que* ‘to be happy that’, *gustar que* ‘to be pleased that’, *molestar que* ‘to bother’, *esperar que* ‘to hope that’, *temer que* ‘to fear that’, amongst others. The current study focuses on tokens of the phrases *me gusta que* ‘it pleases me that’, *me gustó que* ‘it pleased me that’, *me encanta que* ‘I love that’, *me encantó que* ‘I loved that’, *me molesta que* ‘it bothers me that’ and *me molestó que* ‘it bothered me that’. In Spanish, the verb alone reflects tense, aspect, mood and subject agreement (see example (8) from the *me molesta que* Twitter data pool).

(8) *Me molesta que haga eso!*¹ 😞😞😞 ‘It bothers me that he does this 😞😞😞’ – my translation

The verb *molesta* informs us that the thing bothering me is doing so in the present indicative and is a singular subject. *Hables* informs us that the individual being spoken to is a singular, second person, informal “you”, doing so in the present subjunctive.

The verbal phrases under study were selected due to the high frequency with which students use said phrases and the commonality in that they are provided to students in textbooks and intermediate level courses. Additionally, Twitter’s Application Programming Interface (API) is incapable of differentiating between words with and without accents, treating these words as equivalents. As such, it was impossible to select emotive verbal phrases such as *alegrar que/alegrarse de que* (‘to make happy that’, ‘to get happy that’, respectively) due to the confusion the tokens could bring about with the script used. *Me alegre* and *me alegró* are viewed as equivalents by Twitter’s API assessed by R, thus rendering the present and preterit expressions

¹ Though prescriptively *j* would come at the start of example 7, all tweet examples from the data pool throughout the paper reflect the original orthography of the tweet produced by the native-speaker tweeter.

indifferentiable from one another. This would thus make the extraction of data substantially more complicated to perform the study comparing native-speaker mood selection when used with present and past main clauses of emotive verbal expressions in the casual context of tweets. Even if Twitter's API were capable of differentiating between orthographically identical words, with or sans accent, Spanish speakers frequently drop accents from their casual speech in tweets and text messaging. As Myslin & Gries (2010) state,

New technologies have always influenced communication, by adding new ways of communication to the existing ones and/or changing the ways in which existing forms of communication are utilized... Computer-mediated communication (CMC) has had an impact on communication... forms of electronic discourse have given rise to forms of orthography that deviate from standardized conventions and are motivated by segmental phonology, discourse pragmatics, and other exigencies of the channel (p. 85).

Examples of this in use may be seen in Benitez and Carrier's (2010) study regarding English and Spanish monolingual and bilingual text messages. Thurlow (2003) explains the three sociolinguistic maxims that affect texting and many other forms of computer-mediated communication. One of these is the sociolinguistic maxim of brevity and speed, which is mostly evidenced by a lack of capitalization and a lack of appropriate punctuation and abbreviations (e.g. "LOL" for "laugh out loud" and in Spanish, a lack of accents). This first sociolinguistic maxim renders the study of some verbs less certain than others in that it may be impossible without fuller knowledge of context to tag *me alegre* as present or past in a tweet since Spanish speakers may be inclined, for the sake of brevity, ease and efficiency of communication, to leave off the accent that clearly differentiates the present tense *me alegre* from the preterit tense *me*

alegró. An additional example of this may be seen with *espero* ‘I hope’ and *esperó* ‘he/she hoped’ as these expressions differ from one another orthographically by solely accent. However, additionally, *esperar* ‘to hope’ has multiple meanings and functions and when used with the subjunctive, expresses “I hope” whilst when used with the indicative, means “I expect”. On the other hand, the three emotive verbal phrases under study do not possess orthographically equivalent present and preterit forms, so the issues regarding the differentiation of mood selection and main clause tense expression regarding Twitter’s API and Spanish-speaking tweeters are avoided.

2.2 Textbook Analysis

The six textbooks studied are all printed for U.S. instruction of L2 Spanish, intended for intermediate level learners at the university level, for use in the classroom over the course of a full year (two university semesters). At most universities, these books are employed in third and fourth semester Spanish. The six textbooks under analysis are *Fuentes* (Rusch, Domínguez & Garner, 2011) *Atando cabos* (González-Aguilar & Marta Rosso-O’Laughlin, 2012), *Identidades* (Guzmán, Lapuetra, Liskin-Gasparro & Castells, 2013), *Avanzando* (Salazar, Arias & de la Vega, 2013), *En comunidad* (Nichols, Johnson, Lemley & Oso-Melero, 2009) and *Gente* (Munné, Paredes, Martín, Sánchez & Sans, 2013). In order to address the four research questions regarding how and if prescriptive grammar and descriptive grammar differ regarding mood selection (subjunctive vs. indicative) and tense selection (present subjunctive, present perfect subjunctive, imperfect subjunctive) in subordinate clauses to the six aforementioned emotive phrases, an analysis of the textbooks’ approach to the present perfect subjunctive and imperfect subjunctive is necessary. Though all of the texts explain the conjugation of these tenses, as this is not the focus of the current study, the patterns alone provided for when to use

different tenses of the subjunctive mood is all that will be analyzed, not the manner of conjugation.

2.3 Prescriptive Grammar Tendencies

The textbook analysis reveals certain prescriptive grammar tendencies. Overall, *Avanzando*, *En Comunidad*, *Atando Cabos* and *Fuentes* prescribe students to use the present perfect subjunctive in situations in which the main clause that “triggers” subjunctive takes place in the present, and the subordinate clause is in the past. The only two texts that do not encourage students to do so are *Identidades* and *Gente*, and in fact, the present perfect subjunctive is not addressed in these intermediate level texts. *Gente* and *Avanzando* both prescribe students to use the imperfect subjunctive with an action/state that requires subjunctive in the main clause that is expressed in the present where the subordinate clause is expressed in the past.

TABLE 1 demonstrates the patterns of use to which students are exposed and prescribed to use the two subjunctive tenses under study by the six textbooks analyzed. A lack of X in a category does not mean that students are instructed not to use the mood/tense in question, only that the textbook does not teach this pattern of use to students. The sections marked communicate what textbooks explicitly prescribe students to do. Additionally, though this information is not reflected in TABLE 1, all of the textbooks under study instruct students to use the imperfect subjunctive when expressing emotions in past subordinate clauses with main clauses that are expressed in a past tense.

TABLE 1

TEXT	<i>Avanzando</i>	<i>En Comunidad</i>	<i>Atando Cabos</i>	<i>Identidades</i>	<i>Fuentes</i>	<i>Gente</i>
Present Verb _{Emotive} that PP _{Subjunctive}	X	X	X*	N/A**	X	N/A**
Present Verb _{Emotive} that Imperfect _{Subjunctive}	X					X
Preterit Verb _{Emotive} that PP _{Subjunctive}				N/A**		N/A**
Preterit Verb _{Emotive} that Imperfect _{Subjunctive}	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Atando Cabos* is the only text to specify that the PP_{subjunctive} is to be used in subordinate clauses that occurred in the recent past to the main clause expressed in the present that requires subjunctive

**The PP_{subjunctive} is not discussed in the intermediate level of this textbook series, as such, there is no information to be analyzed.

TABLE 2 below reflects examples of the information provided in TABLE 1, but with examples of mock tweets that could possibly be encountered in the study. The rows corresponding to each sentence/faux tweet are marked according to whether they would be prescribed to students as structures to follow by the six texts under analysis.

TABLE 2

TEXT	<i>Avanzando</i>	<i>En Comunidad</i>	<i>Atando Cabos</i>	<i>Identidades</i>	<i>Fuentes</i>	<i>Gente</i>
Me gusta que se lo hayas dicho.	X	X	X*	N/A**	X	N/A**
Me gusta que se lo dijeras.	X					X
Me gustó que se lo hayas dicho.				N/A**		N/A**
Me gustó que se lo dijeras.	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Atando Cabos* is the only text to specify that the PP_{subjunctive} is to be used in subordinate clauses that occurred in the recent past to the main clause expressed in the present that requires subjunctive

**The PP_{subjunctive} is not discussed in the intermediate level of this textbook series. As such, there is no information to be analyzed.

TABLE 3 provides the percentages with which the six textbooks prescribe each use. The two rows regarding the PP_{subjunctive} are based solely on the books that contain their instruction. As two texts do not introduce students to the PP_{subjunctive} for the sake of the accuracy of data, they have not been included in the calculation of these two rows in TABLE 3. All six (100%) of the texts analyzed prescribe students to follow a main clause containing a present emotive verbal expression with a subordinate clause in the PP_{subjunctive} when said subordinate clause refers to the past of the present moment. Two out of the six intermediate-level textbooks (33.33%) prescribe students the possibility to use the imperfect_{subjunctive} in the aforementioned situation, in place of the PP_{subjunctive}. None of the textbooks prescribe the use of the PP_{subjunctive} in the subordinate clause when the emotion of the main clause is expressed in the past. All six prescribe students with the use of the imperfect_{subjunctive} in the aforementioned situation.

TABLE 3

Percentage (Number) of Texts Prescribing Use	
Present Verb _{Emotive} that PP _{Subjunctive}	100 %* (4)
Present Verb _{Emotive} that Imperfect _{Subjunctive}	33.33% (2)
Preterit Verb _{Emotive} that PP _{Subjunctive}	0%* (0)
Preterit Verb _{Emotive} that Imperfect _{Subjunctive}	100%(6)

**The PP_{subjunctive} is not discussed in two of the intermediate level textbook series. As such, only four textbooks can be analyzed for this construction

It will be interesting to see how the percentages above compare to results gleaned in the following section of this study involving the constructed corpus of tweets.

3 Results

3.1 Twitter Analysis

In order to look at the patterns in which Spanish speakers in the casual context of tweeting flout the prescribed patterns of use of the subjunctive, first, the 1,200 tweets pulled from Twitter using the R language programming were tagged as triggering the subjunctive or

indicative mood in the subordinate clause. Any retweeted tweets were removed from the data sample of each of the six emotive verbal phrases under study to guarantee that one individual's single tweet was not counted more than once due to being a retweet or retweeted by others.

Twitter's API notifies its users whether a given tweet is a retweet so this information was used to exclude this type of message, and the script used with R tags this when the data are exported to a spreadsheet file. As such, before the first 200 tweets of each of the six emotive verbal phrases were tagged, any retweeted tweets or retweets were removed from the data pool. Following this, the first 200 of the remaining sample of each verbal phrase studied were tagged as containing subordinate clauses conjugated in the subjunctive or the indicative. Some tweets could not be classified as either having triggered the subjunctive or indicative due to a lack of information (i.e. a lack of information regarding the conjugated verb (9) or tweets without a subordinate clause (10)). Examples of actual tweets taken from the pool of data that either lack sufficient information or a subordinate clause to tag are as follows:

- (9) *¿Prefieres hablar o escuchar? — Estoy sorda, pero sé escuchar. Hablo por los codos, así que me gusta que me escu...*

'Do you prefer talking or listening?—I am deaf, but I know how to listen. I am a chatterbox, so I like that...' – my translation

- (10) *@ASBeelz ¡Me encantó! QUE SIM MÁS GUAPO :3*

'@ASBeelz I LOVED IT! What a handsome Sim! :3' – my translation

@solamentemark ya la vi!me gustó:)que te pareció

'@solamentemark I already saw it! I liked it! :) what did you think' –my translation

In example (9) above, taken from the *me gusta que...* data pool, the tweet cuts off before the verbal ending, rendering it impossible to discern if the tweeter intended to use the verb in the indicative or subjunctive mood. In the examples provided in (10), taken from the *me encantó que* and *me gustó* data pools respectively, there is a lack of a subordinate clause to these studied emotive verbal phrases, meaning that the subordinate clauses (which do not exist) are incapable of being tagged as either of the moods. In both cases, these tweets were tagged N/A.

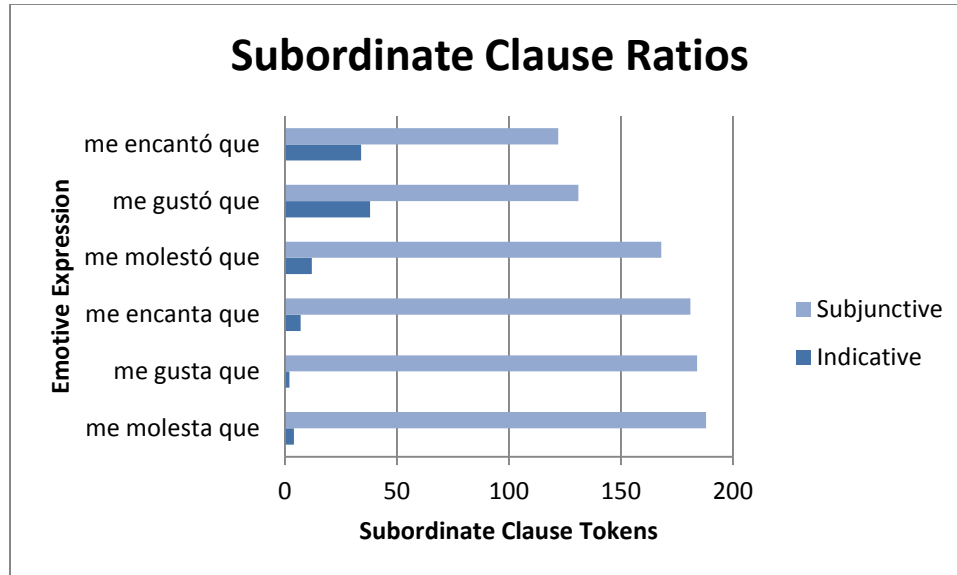
After coding all 1,200 tweets (200 for each of the six aforementioned emotive verbal phrases under study), the percentages with which Spanish speakers selected either the subjunctive or indicative moods were calculated in order to glean possible tendencies of Spanish tweeters to flout the prescribed pattern of use that requires subordinate clauses with emotive expression main clauses to be conjugated in the subjunctive if the clauses hold different subjects. TABLE 4 reflects the distribution of the data, displaying the total tokens and percentage of subordinate clauses employing the subjunctive and indicative.

TABLE 4

Emotive expression	Indicative Tokens (%)	Subjunctive Tokens (%)
me molesta que	4 (2.08)	188 (97.92)
me gusta que	2 (1.07)	184 (98.93)
me encanta que	7 (3.7)	181 (96.3)
me molestó que	12 (6.67)	168 (93.33)
me gustó que	38 (22.49)	131 (77.51)
me encantó que	34 (21.79)	122 (88.21)

GRAPH 1 reflects the ratios in which each of the main clause emotive expressions (both present and preterit versions) had subjunctive and indicative subordinate clauses.

GRAPH 1



As can be seen from the data, the rate at which the preterit emotive expressions are used with indicative subordinate clauses is as high as 22.49%, as well as used over 20 times more frequently than their present forms do (as is seen between the resulting tokens of *me gusta que* and *me gustó que*). This coincides with many of the aforementioned studies regarding the variability of mood selection that Spanish speakers themselves may reflect. Though the percentage of selection of the indicative mood over the subjunctive mood in subordinate clauses with past tense emotive expression main clauses is not in the majority, I argue that as high as 22.49% (nearly one-fourth of the time) is still a significant portion of the results, certainly higher than the percentage of the textbooks which instruct their students to use this construction. Additionally, though the semantic meaning behind the emotive verbs under study lies outside the parameters of this study, it is still worth mentioning that *gustar* and *encantar* yielded fairly

similar results in their past tense forms, this progression of the indicative mood may be occurring at the construction-level rather than the paradigmatic. Future studies will explore this possibility.

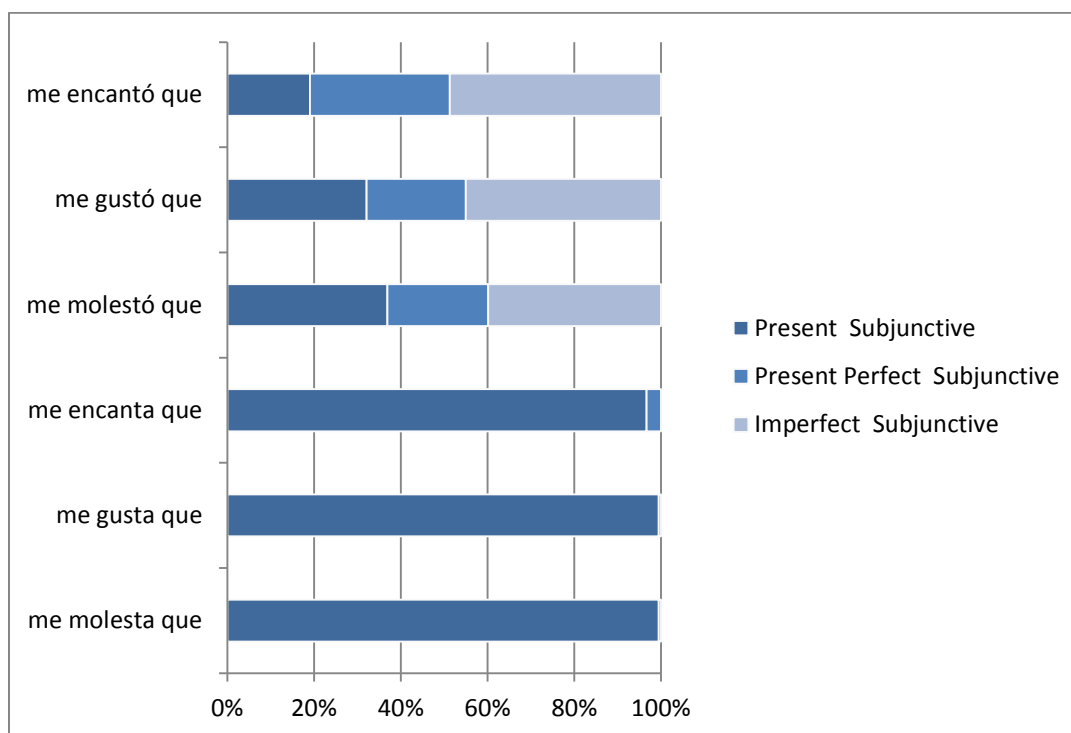
In order to address the third research question, an analysis of the employment of the different tenses of the subjunctive mood as found in the data pool is necessary. The overall number of tokens of subordinate clauses containing the subjunctive for each of the emotive verbs under study has already been provided. These subjunctive tokens were thus categorized as a present, present perfect or imperfect verbal conjugation. The distribution appears in TABLE 5, showing the overall number of tokens of each tense of the subjunctive mood following the listed emotive verb main clauses.

TABLE 5

Emotive expression	Present Subjunctive	Present Perfect Subjunctive	Imperfect Subjunctive
me molesta que	187	1	0
me gusta que	183	1	0
me encanta que	175	6	0
me molestó que	62	39	67
me gustó que	42	30	59
me encantó que	23	39	59

A percentage-based representation of TABLE 5, reflecting the frequency with which each of the subjunctive tenses were used in the subordinate clauses to the emotive main clauses under study may be seen in GRAPH 2 below.

GRAPH 2



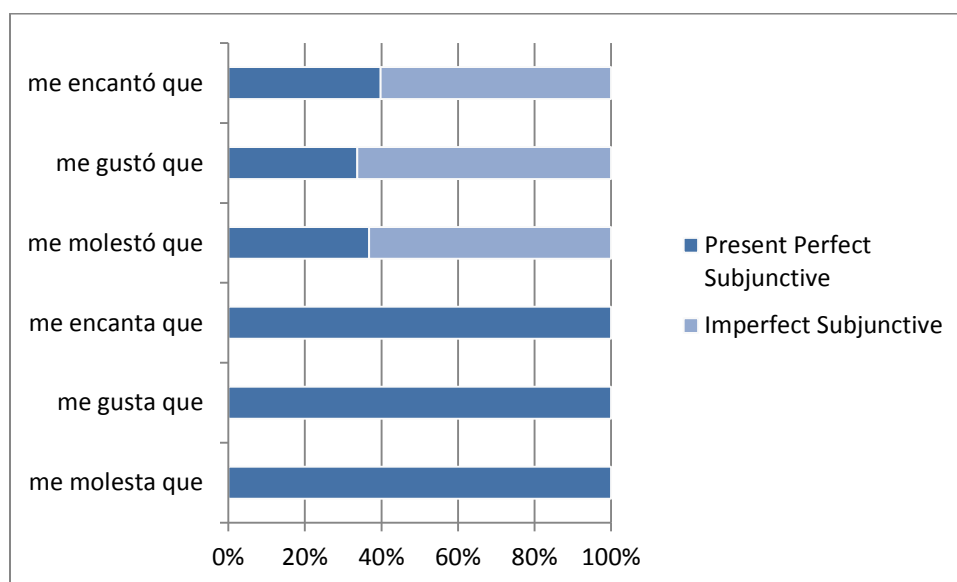
From the above results, the tendency of all six textbooks used for analysis to prescribe use of the present perfect in past reference subordinate clauses with main clauses triggering the subjunctive in the present tense coincides with what Spanish speakers do within the casual context under study. However, it is also worth noting the frequency with which Spanish tweeters select the present subjunctive in the subordinate clause over either of the past tense subjunctives under study, when the emotive main clause is expressed in the preterit (36.9%, 32% and 19% of the time for *me molestó que*, *me gustó que* and *me encantó que*, respectively). An example tweet from the data pool follows below, reflecting the use of the present subjunctive in the subordinate clause with *me encantó que*:

- (11) *Me encantó que me diga esoo* I loved that you tell me thiiis

With the frequency at which the tense selection pattern encountered in (11) occurs within the tweets of native-Spanish speakers, it is worth mentioning as a pattern of use that is not discussed in the prescribed patterns of use in textbooks.

In order to provide a comparison between the patterns of past tense subjunctive selection by Spanish tweeters and the patterns textbooks prescribe students to use, GRAPH 3 follows below, near identical to GRAPH 2. However, in GRAPH 3, the present subjunctive subordinate clause percentages are removed to show how often Spanish speakers select either the present perfect subjunctive or the imperfect subjunctive to express past actions.

GRAPH 3



From the above representation of data, it is clear that the tendency (100%) with which intermediate level textbooks prescribe students to use the present perfect subjunctive in the subordinate clause when the main clause requires subjunctive and is expressed in the present is in line with what Spanish speakers do, as 100% of the tokens expressed from the present towards the past were completed by Spanish speakers using the present perfect alone. However, upon considering the frequency with which Spanish speakers employ the present perfect subjunctive

over the imperfect subjunctive when the main clause is expressed in the preterit, the results are divergent from what Spanish L2 textbooks instruct students to do. Regarding *me molestó que*, *me gustó que* and *me encantó que*, Spanish tweeters elected to use the present perfect instead of the imperfect in the subordinate clause 36.8%, 33.7% and 39.8% of the time, respectively. Spanish tweeters consistently employed the present perfect subjunctive in place of the imperfect subjunctive more than one-third of the time. This coincides with Howe and Schwenter (2003). Though their aforementioned study deals with the present perfect indicative and the preterit indicative, it is possible that the patterns of use of the subjunctive counterparts to these tenses (present perfect and imperfect, as there is no preterit subjunctive), have begun to align with the pattern of overlapping function experienced in Howe and Schwenter's (2003) article, using the present perfect subjunctive in place of the imperfect subjunctive, as though the present perfect subjunctive were spreading its functionality, increasing its overlap with the imperfect subjunctive. An analysis of this alignment regarding the aforementioned data and the normative uses of each of the past subjunctive tenses under study will be touched on in future studies. In TABLE 6 (a revisit of TABLE 1), it is revealed that prescriptively, not a single intermediate-level textbook prescribes this pattern as a possible use to learners.

TABLE 6

TEXT	<i>Avanzando</i>	<i>En Comunidad</i>	<i>Atando Cabos</i>	<i>Identidades</i>	<i>Fuentes</i>	<i>Gente</i>
Present Verb _{Emotive} that PP _{Subjunctive}	X	X	X*	N/A**	X	N/A**
Present Verb _{Emotive} that Imperfect _{Subjunctive}	X					X
Preterit Verb _{Emotive} that PP _{Subjunctive}				N/A**		N/A**
Preterit Verb _{Emotive} that Imperfect _{Subjunctive}	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Atando Cabos* is the only text to specify that the PP_{subjunctive} is to be used in subordinate clauses that occurred in the recent past to the main clause expressed in the present that requires subjunctive

**The PP_{subjunctive} is not discussed in the intermediate level of this textbook series, as such, there is no information to be analyzed.

Though the pattern of use, Preterit Verb_{Emotive} that PP_{Subjunctive}, is not included in the instruction of any of the six textbooks, Spanish tweeters are using this pattern consistently more than one-third and nearly as much as two-fifths of the time in place of Imperfect_{Subjunctive} that the textbooks focus on.

Aiello Fernandez's (1987) study contradicts the results of this portion of the study, reflecting use of the present perfect subjunctive in his quantitative study of Cuban Spanish at a frequency of only 2%. However, 28 years have passed since 1987 and Fernandez's study treated a corpus of 300 pages of both fiction and nonfiction Cuban works, meaning that the current study and his 1987 study differ in form. Though both are written forms of communication, due to the highly casual nature associated with digital forms of communication such as tweets and texting, the current study reflects a very different type of written discourse. Additionally, as the current study reflects a corpus composed of Spanish tweets from worldwide, it is quite possible that if

the study had been performed specifically in Cuba, the outcomes would have resulted differently, possibly in line with Fernandez's (1987) study.

4 Discussion, Conclusions & Limitations

Though the current study carries some implications for Spanish language textbook and material writers, it is clear that it is limited. It touches on only one of the commonly prescribed triggers of the subjunctive (emotive verbs), and it is possible that the results of the study would have resulted quite differently had the study focused on subordinate clauses of doubt or volition for example. Additionally, though the study is quantitative, it is limited in that it utilizes a data pool of only 1,200 tokens from which to glean patterns of use. Further, although the content of the textbooks is rather consistent, it is given that the textbook analysis regarding the employment of the subjunctive tenses is built on the information provided to intermediate-level students from only six textbooks. Finally, as previously mentioned, the manner in which one communicates via such a casual context as tweeting or instant messaging is likely to be very different from the discourse encountered in a job interview or some other formal context.

Nonetheless, the study brings compelling information to the table that may be valuable to Spanish textbook writers, or at the least, may warn them of patterns to look out for in their future material writing. As always, additional studies are needed to prove to what extent the results of the current study are applicable to other forms of discourse and contexts. As the current study deals with Spanish tweets internationally, and not from any particular region or sociolinguistic trait, it will be interesting to see in future studies with more finite specifications if the same results are found. At this point, though only some 20% of the time is the indicative employed in place of the subjunctive in subordinate clauses of preterit, emotive verbs, it may be seen, at the least, that this context of use of the indicative is substantially greater than from a present-tense

emotive verb as a main clause. As such, Spanish speakers tend to flout the prescribed “rule” of the subjunctive more when expressing themselves in the past about a past event or state than in the present of the same.

The results of the study reflect that there is a greater tendency by Spanish speakers in casual contexts such as Twitter to occasionally employ indicative subordinate clauses when the main clause triggering the subjunctive is expressed in the preterit. Though the current study is not diachronic, a similar study done to document mood selection in these contexts over time may reveal the roots of this behavior as well as give textbook writers an idea of what to look out for in the creation of their materials. There is very little value in the prescriptive deviating from the descriptive. Though the results are significant, they do not likely reflect a great enough difference for the presentation of emotions with the subjunctive in textbooks to be changed at this point. However, should this pattern increase much further, it may become something L2 textbook and other L2 language material creators may want to include in the introductions they provide to the subjunctive mood. Additionally, the current study is rather limited regarding its scope of the uses of the subjunctive. If the rate at which emotive expression main clauses in the simple past trigger an indicative tense over a subjunctive one is already as great as nearly one-fourth of the time, at what rates are Spanish speakers in casual contexts employing the indicative over the subjunctive following other subjunctive triggers (i.e. doubts, volition, etc.)? Only time and further studies may tell.

Though the pattern of use, Preterit Verb_{Emotive} that PP_{Subjunctive}, is not included in the instruction of any of the six textbooks, Spanish tweeters are using this pattern consistently more than one-third and nearly as much as two-fifths of the time in place of the Imperfect_{Subjunctive}, which the textbooks focus on. Though this is an intermediate level course, I argue that such

information is at least worth mentioning to students even if it is not practiced specifically nor thoroughly. At least exposing students to this construction would prepare them for encountering such use in natural contexts with Spanish speakers. This variability in past tense subjunctive selection may possibly be explained by what Gili and Gaya (1980) say:

El carácter de irrealidad que corresponde a las acciones verbales expresadas en subjuntivo, hace que las relaciones temporales de los distintos tiempos, o formas, sean mucho menos claras que en el indicativo. Por otra parte, a nueve tiempos del indicativo corresponden prácticamente cuatro en el subjuntivo, puesto que han caído en desuso los dos futuros. Así tenemos que a cada uno de los tiempos del subjuntivo corresponden por los menos dos del indicativo (p. 176).

‘The trait of ir-reality that corresponds to the verbal actions that are expressed in the subjunctive makes the temporal relations of the different tenses or forms much less clear than in the indicative. On the other hand, four subjunctive tenses correspond to nine in the indicative, since the two future subjunctive tenses have fallen into disuse. In this manner, each subjunctive tense corresponds to at least two indicative tenses’ - my translation.

Whether this or another reason lies behind the confusion of temporal relations involving the subjunctive mood is unknown, though it is a possibility. At the least, it may be said that current and future textbook writers should keep the results of this study in mind when planning their future L2 materials and future studies. Even if not implemented immediately, the results of this study should at least serve as points on the radar of future researchers. It will be interesting to see if the functional overlap of the aforementioned subjunctive past tenses will increase further

and if Spanish speakers will continue to flout the subjunctive to an even greater extent when their main clause is expressed in the past.

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